

THE DRAMA;

OR,

THEATRICAL

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VOL. V.

MR. MACREADY.

“ The force of his own merit makes his way.”

SHAKSPEARE.

“ There is a shrine bedewed with many a tear,
To lovers blissful, and to friendship dear;
Where art expires, where evil passions sleep,
And hearts of grief in silence love to weep :
A stream of living flame around it plays,
And *Genius* oftimes gilds it with his rays ;
Whilst heavenly *Pity*, like the encircling vine,
Clings gently round, and breathes along the shrine :
The shrine of *Feeling*, and her vot'ry *thou*,
Before whose pow'r the sternest hearts must bow,
Whose force and judgment, eloquence and truth,
Give fire to age, and virtuous zeal to youth.”

PUBLIC life, and particularly the life of a theatrical performer (observes a dramatic critic), may be compared to the River Nile, which, breaking from obscure commencements, is fed by a hundred tributary streams, till, being consolidated by its course, it pursues a more expansive path, and rolls its rich waters in triumph to the ocean.

The analogy, which this simile bears to the difficulties and ordeals, which the candidate for histrionic fame has to undergo ere he can arrive at the wished-for gaol, will easily be perceived. There is, in fact, no profession so arduous as that of an actor ; it is, at first, one continued round of toil, vexation, disappointment, disgust, and regret, till, by an almost super-human effort, the weary traveller steps at once into the bright sunshine of public estimation.

Of Mr. MACREADY's life very little has been gleaned, and that little is of so unimportant a nature, that it is hardly worth relating. That gentleman appears to have always had an invincible reluctance to furnish even the slightest materials for a biographical narrative, and the compiler of this sketch is therefore thrown upon those scanty and imperfect resources from which its leading features have been supplied.

WILLIAM CHARLES MACREADY was born on the 3d of March, 1793, in Charles Street, Fitzroy Square, where his father (of whom he is the eldest son), at that time a valuable pillar of the Covent Garden establishment, resided. From a private academy of considerable eminence he was removed to Rugby School, where his faculties were so beneficially exerted, that few students have left that ancient seminary with a higher reputation for classical acquirement. Having been disappointed in his original destination, the bar, to which his great powers of elocution would have formed a distinguished ornament, he directed his views to the drama, and, before he had attained the age of seventeen, assumed the part of *Romeo* with such success at the Birmingham Theatre, that his future lot became decided, and the stage was enriched, from that *début*, with an actor who promises to endue it with unparalleled lustre.

In Newcastle, Bath, Dublin, and Liverpool, the reputation of Mr. MACREADY had been so brilliantly established, that the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre solicited him to accept a temporary engagement upon those boards, for the purpose of supporting Miss O'Neill, who, at the period alluded to, had just commenced her resplendent career. This proposal, for very obvious reasons,

was rejected, and he soon after entered upon a negotiation with the rival establishment, which was rendered inconclusive, we have reason to believe, by the parsimonious suggestions of Lord BYRON, who thought that twelve pounds *per week* were quite sufficient for the retention of an individual, who, under existing circumstances, was entitled to twenty. Had the talents of KEAN and MACREADY been united beneath the dome of Drury Lane, such a powerful conjunction would assuredly have averted the whole of that distress by which it was soon after overwhelmed.

The efforts of Mr. MACREADY at Covent Garden Theatre, though lamentably narrowed, till of late, by the claims of conflicting talent, had made a deep and due impression long before this impediment was finally removed. He now stands forward as the great atlas of that establishment, and forms one of the illustrious *trio* which so splendidly adorns the metropolitan stage.

As a luminous critique on many of his performances has already appeared in the first volume of our work, we shall not enlarge upon them here, but merely observe *en passant*, that, though accustomed to represent stupendous pictures of dark, desperate, and distorted passion, it is not in this species of performance, alone, that Mr. M. is entitled to public applause; he has a matchless power, which must be fully exercised, and his performances of the last season are calculated to call forth all his brilliancy of imagination, and cause him to exhibit all those spirit-stirring powers of genius which are so peculiarly his own. The success of the last new tragedy of "*Julian*" must be attributed to his excellent personation of the hero; its superiority was felt and acknowledged by all. His sensibility is delightful, and the refinement of his delineations superlatively excellent; he may be considered, at once, the most romantic and most chastened performer of the day.

Having given this brief sketch of his public life, we shall now insert a paragraph extracted from the "*Birmingham Mirror*," which is equally honourable to his private reputation.

"When Mr. M. was performing at Birmingham, he

had an opportunity of displaying his courage and humanity worthy of being recorded to his honour. He had left the house at the tragedy of '*Hamlet*,' and was proceeding to his lodgings in the suburbs, when he approached a small cottage in flames, surrounded by a great concourse of people, as usual, eager to look on, and loath to assist. The flames were bursting out of the front door, and a cry of distress was heard from within; he instantly threw off his coat, waistcoat, and hat, and, with the agility of a harlequin, sprang into the parlour window, from whence he soon issued with an infant in his grasp: the flames had caught his cloaths, which, however, were soon extinguished, and the infant received by the speechless mother in an agony no words can describe. The hat, coat, and waistcoat of the adventurous hero were gone, and he darted through the crowd as he was to his lodgings. The papers teemed with this exploit, but no one could tell the name of him who had so gallantly ventured his life, and a pecuniary reward of considerable amount was offered to 'the unknown' by a committee of gentlemen. Mr. M. like other benevolent men, now found his sweetest reward in concealment, and the testimony of an approving conscience; but a circumstance occurred which brought him forward against himself. A fellow was apprehended selling a handsome coat, in the sleeve of which was written Mr. M.'s name; he was sent for by the police magistrates, and identified the coat stolen from him at the fire. Every one now lauded his modesty more than his intrepidity; and the thunders of applause that greeted him on his appearance in the theatre must have been the most grateful tribute to a feeling heart. Mr. M.'s goodness did not stop here; his benefit took place shortly after, and it was a complete 'bumper.' He received in an anonymous letter a bank note for 10*l*. '*as a tribute to his humanity and courage in rescuing the cottager's child from the flames.*' Mr. M. instantly called upon the unfortunate couple who had lost their all, and presented them with that sum, saying, '*he had been only the mean instrument in the hand of God in procuring it for them;*' he also promised to assist the infant, as it advanced in years, and he has doubtless fulfilled his word. We want words to express our admiration

of such conduct; we almost envy the self-approbation such a man must enjoy, and fervently hope he may long live as an ornament to the stage as he is to human nature."

THE NOTE BOOK.

[For Correspondents.]

No. I.

Mr. D. CHAPMAN makes an inquiry concerning a passage in Act II. of CONGREVE's "*Love for Love*," the meaning of which (he says) I do not exactly comprehend, but which some one of your readers, who is better read than myself, may probably be able to explain to my satisfaction. The passage I allude to runs as follows:—

"*Sir Sampson*. By the horns of the moon, you would say, brother Capricorn.

"*Foresight*. Capricorn in your teeth, thou modern Mandeville; FERDINAND MENDEZ PINTO was but a type of thee, thou liar of the first magnitude.

"What I wish to be informed of is this, who was FERDINAND MENDEZ PINTO? For I confess, though I have read and heard of a vast number of most infernal liars, Mr. PINTO is still a stranger to me."

A SHAKSPERIAN wishes for some particulars concerning the LUCY family. In the "*Sketch Book*" (he says) is a very interesting account of the author's visit to Charlecot, and which is copied into the first volume of "*The Drama*," p. 216, but it contains no real information; little is now known of this family, and for that they are indebted to the malice of SHAKSPEARE. Query, did he introduce the honourable character of Sir WILLIAM LUCY into the first part of "*Henry VI.*" by way of conciliating them? During the Civil Wars it appears that they embraced the royal cause; as SPENCER LUCY, Esq. of Charlecot, compounded for his estate, with the usurping powers, at 35*l.* 13*s.*

IAGO requires some information relative to a personage named in several of our old plays, and more par-

ticularly in BEN JONSON's drama of "*The Fortunate Isles and their Union*, 1626," named HOWLEGLAS, and of whom he has never been able to glean any satisfactory notice. In the novel of the "*Abbot*," he is mentioned as the "venerable Father HOWLEGLAS," and an ancient game, in which he is introduced, is described.

A CORRESPONDENT requests us, "in order to give it as much publicity as possible, to observe, that a musical reviewer of celebrity always spells the name of HANDEL with the German diphthong ä; and that if this be the correct method, which (he thinks) there can be no doubt of, all those who respect and value his memory must wish, that, in future, his name may appear with a diæresis ä, as almost every fount can furnish the type."

T. ROBERTS "would feel gratified by some further notices of the celebrated singer, FARINELLI, in addition to the mention made of him in Vol. III. p. 16. In looking over BOWEN's *Gazetteer*, I observed that FARINELLI, for the first ten years of his residence in Spain, used to sing every night to PHILIP V. the *same four airs*. I should be glad to know what those airs were."

PHILO DRAMATICUS observes, "that, on June 25, the performances at the Haymarket, instead of '*Morning, Noon, and Night*,' and '*Mrs. Smith*,' were the '*School for Scandal*' and the '*Romp*,' which were substituted on account of LISTON's illness." Our readers are requested to alter the night's performances accordingly."

PEEPER says, that "common prostitutes and kept women are so thickly scattered throughout our theatres, that no spot is free from their contaminating influence, to the great detriment of the managers, and the audience assembled. Their first appearance deceives, I am apt to think, those who would otherwise prevent their improper intrusion—I say *first* appearance, because their meretricious manners soon discover them, but then too late. I could wish that the 27th EDWARD III. 1355, were not a dead letter. By that statute they were compelled to wear *striped hoods of party colours, and their garments the wrong side*

outwards. In Rome, also, the dresses of the matron and harlots were prescribed and distinct. Why not now in England?"

Mr. HENRY WILLIAMS says, "in Vol. III. p. 180, of *The Drama*," an account of the origin of OLIVER GOLDSMITH's *She Stoops to Conquer* is given, in which the jest is ascribed to a Mr. GRUMMET, of Lincolnshire, as practised on a commercial traveller. Now, in OTRIDGE's splendid edition of his works, the scene is laid in the town of Ardagh in Ireland, and in the Supplement to the Gentleman's Magazine, Vol. XC. the subject of the comedy is attributed to a circumstance of the poet's own life as follows:—Some friend had given the young poet a present of a guinea, on his going from his mother's residence in the town of Ballymahon to a school in Edgeworth's Town, where it appears he finished his education, of which he received the rudiments from the Rev. Mr. HUGHES, Vicar of the parish of Ballymahon. He had diverted himself on the way, the whole day, by viewing the gentlemen's seats on the road until night-fall, when he found himself a mile or two out of his direct road, in the middle of the street of Ardagh. Here he inquired for the best house in the place, meaning an inn; but being wilfully misunderstood by a wag, a fencing-master of the name of KELLY, who boasted of having been the instructor of the celebrated MARQUIS OF GRANBY, he was directed to the large old-fashioned residence, of Sir RALPH FETHERSTONE, the landlord of the town, where he was shewn into the parlour, when he found the hospitable master of the house sitting by a good fire. His mistake was immediately perceived by Sir RALPH, who, being a man of humour, and well acquainted with the poet's family, encouraged him in the deception. GOLDSMITH ordered a good supper, invited his host and the family to partake of it, treated them with a bottle or two of wine, and at going to bed ordered a hot cake to be prepared for his breakfast; nor was it till his departure, when he called for the bill, that he discovered, that, while he imagined he was at an inn, he had been hospitably entertained in a private family of the first rank in the country. This story, the relater says, was confirmed to him by the late Sir THOMAS FETHERSTONE,

Bart. a short time before his death. Which of these stories is the real origin of the play?"

PANTALOOON requests "some account of that singular personage, the party-coloured hero, *Harlequin*, where and at what period was he introduced into theatrical exhibitions, and his origin. In an "*Etymological Gleaner*" in my possession, it is observed, that the name is said to have been given by FRANCIS I. of France to a busy buffoon, in ridicule of his enemy, CHARLES LE QUINT. MENAGE derives it from a famous comedian that frequented Mr. HARLEY's house, whom his friends called *Harlequin's* little HARLEY; I should be glad to receive any intelligence concerning him. A continuation of the curious remarks on pantomimes commenced in Vol. II. p. 125, by the DRAMATIST, would be very acceptable."

[*To be occasionally continued.*]

FLORES HISTRIONICI.

No. XI.

THE FUGITIVE.

Scene—A Valley, with a small Negro Town in the back ground; in the distance, a wild uncultivated Waste.

Enter MOMBAZE meeting ZAMBOIA and Child.

Mom. Say whither, wand'rer, points thy cheerless way,
When length'ning shades announce the close of day?
In yon wild waste no friendly roof thou'lt find,
The haunt of serpents, and the savage kind.
And, sure, remembrance mocks me, or I trace
In thine, the semblance of ZAMBOIA's face?
Yet scarce thyself! for in thy alter'd eye,
I read the records of hard destiny.
From thy rack'd bosom sighs that ceaseless flow,
A man bespeak thee exercised in woe.
Say, then, what chance has burst thy rigid chains;
Has led thee, frantic, o'er these distant plains!

What potent sorrows can thy peace infest?
What crimes conceal'd prey on thy anxious breast?

Zam. No crimes this heart infest, this hand defile;
Or, frantic, drive me o'er a foreign soil.
A murdered wife, and wrongs unmatched I mourn;
And buried joys, that never shall return!
If, then, thou'rt tempted by the traitor's meed,
Take this poor life, and prosper by the deed!

Mom. Not the rich produce of Angola's shore,
Not all the miser's heap'd and glittering store,
Not all that pride would grasp, or pomp display,
Should tempt this hand the wretched to betray.
No traitors dwell within this blest domain,
The friends of peace we live, a guileless train.
Grief dims thy eye, or gladly would'st thou see
Thy lov'd MOMBAZE yet survives in me.
Canst thou forget? I taught thy youth to dare
The sylvan herd, and wage the desp'rate war.
Can'st thou forget? One common lot we drew;
With thee enchain'd, a captive's fate I knew:
Distrust me not, but unreserv'd disclose
The anxious tale that in thy bosom glows;
To part our griefs is oft to mitigate,
And social sorrows blunt the darts of fate.

Zam. Dear to my sight that form, and doubly dear
Thy well-known accents meet ZAMBOIA's ear.
Oh! had I died, and left the name of slave
Deep, deep entomb'd within an early grave!
Oh! had I died, e'er ruthless fates constrain,
With thee enthrall'd, to cross the western main!
Oh! to have met a glorious death in arms,
And ne'er beheld MELINDA's fatal charms!
Time would be short, and memory would fail,
To dwell distinctly on the various tale.
Tedious to tell what treach'rous arts were try'd,
To sooth the smart of still revolting pride.
I liv'd and lov'd—then kiss'd the fatal chain;
No joy but one to cheer a life of pain.
Yet, witness bear, thou dear departed ghost,
That lonely rov'st thy Gambia's sacred coast!
How sweet the toil that met the morning's ray,
How light the labour that o'erlasted day!

The reed-built hovel, and the scanty fare,
Imperial bliss could give, MELINDA there !
Soft was my pillow on that gentle breast,
When o'erpress'd nature droop'd in want of rest !
And if a rebel tear disgrac'd my eye,
Thine was the tear, and thine the bursting sigh.
Bliss I could boast, unenvied had it pass'd,
But bliss too great for hapless slaves to last.

A wretch, who banish'd from his native clime,
Defil'd with many a black and monstrous crime,
Presided o'er us, and with iron hand,
Held savage sway o'er all the servile band.
In him each hellish passion rudely glow'd,
And cruelty in him most cruel show'd.
Him, lust infernal, one sad evening, led
T' invade the chasteness of my marriage bed :
I chanc'd t' approach—the caitiff I surpris'd—
My wife preserv'd—and had his guilt chastised,
While full with vengeance boil'd my wounded heart—
But chance reserv'd him for a baser part.
Meanwhile, o'erjoy'd that vice e'en once had fail'd,
I bless'd the gods that innocence prevailed.

The baffled villain, now a foe profess'd,
Rolls scenes of blood within his rankling breast ;
With coward arts he forg'd a crafty tale,
And hands unrighteous poize the partial scale.
Imputed crimes to crush the weak suffice,
Hearsay is guilt, and damning fact surmise.
Where uncurb'd will usurps the place of laws,
No friendly pleader takes the wretch's cause.
Our tyrant's fears each want of proof supply'd,
We stand condemn'd—unquestion'd and untry'd.

Oh ! had the grief and shame been all my own,
And the black vengeance lit on me alone !
But harsher fates a harder cause decreed—
These eyes were doom'd to see MELINDA bleed.
I saw her by relentless ruffians bound ;
The brandish'd scourge inflict the mortal wound ;
Her tender frame abus'd, and mangled o'er ;
I saw her weltering in a flood of gore.

The murd'rous scene had soon a dreadful close—
And do I live!—And can I speak my woes!—
Her pregnant womb no longer could sustain
The public shame, and agony of pain;
A birth abortive robb'd her of her breath,
And pangs convulsive seal'd her eyes in death.
One only pledge my weary soul detains;
This hapless infant, all that now remains;
The mournful image of my once lov'd wife,
And ties me down a while to hated life.
Else this bold hand should liberty restore,
And my rapt spirit seek a happier shore.
Thro' devious paths with timid haste we fly,
Where yon blue mountains meet the bending sky.
Nor serpent haunts I dread, nor desarts drear,
The master-savage, Man, alone I fear.

Mom. Since from our native realms compelled to part,
Such pointed sorrows have not touch'd my heart.
Insatiate plunderers! could it not suffice
To rend, inhuman, all the social ties!
From guiltless joys, that bless'd our native soil,
Dragg'd to a life of misery and toil;
Would you yet take the little God has giv'n,
And intercept the gracious dews of Heav'n!
Your rage for blood, wild as your thirst of gain,
Shall no respects, not truths divine, restrain!
The eternal fabric can a name undo?
Is rape and murder sanctified in you?
And us, what laws, as impious as severe,
Forbid the common rights of man to share?
Didst thou, Creative Pow'r, thy views confine?
For one proud race the spacious earth design?
For them alone does plenty deck the vale,
Blush in the fruit, and tinge the scented gale?
For them the seasons all their sweets unfold?
Blooms the fresh rose, and shines the waving gold?
O, no, all bounteous is thy equal hand,
And thy fix'd laws irrevocable stand!
Hapless ZAMBOIA! had it been thy fate
With me to share my more propitious state;
Thy soul had breath'd no impious wish to die,
Nor the big tear had trembled in thine eye.

Disjoin'd from thee, I too to slav'ry went ;
 But heaven a father, not a master lent.
 He seems as Virtue's self in mortal guise,
 Tho' wealthy, simple, and tho' modest, wise.
 Blest be the hand that life and freedom gave !
 That power can boast, exerted but to save !
 Blest the sage tongue that stored the vacant mind !
 The manners soften'd, and the heart refined !
 That still to heav'n's unerring dictates true,
 Eternal truth unfolded to our view !
 But come ! thy faint and weary limbs repose,
 Forgetful of thy fears thy griefs compose ;
 By morning's dawn with earnest foot I speed,
 Nor sleep these eyes till I behold thee freed.
 Some wealth I have, and did I prize it more,
 Well spared for this I deem the sacred store.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

REMARKABLE ACTOR.

MR. DRAMA,

There is an old joke about the application of a provincial actor to SHERIDAN for a situation in the Drury Lane company, which is not destitute of humour ; but the disappearance, in various ways, of the individuals mentioned in it, has rendered its pleasantry somewhat obsolete ; I have therefore brushed it up, and adapted it to the present race of performers. Here it is at your service.

Your's &c. RAZOR.

A candidate for the stage lately applied to the manager of Drury Lane Theatre for an engagement. After he had exhibited specimens of his various talents, the following dialogue took place between him and the manager :—

Sir, you stutter,

So does WILKINSON.

You are knock-knee'd,

So is GATTIE.

You are very short,

So is KEAN.

You are lame of a leg,
So is MATHEWS.
 You have a damn'd ugly face,
So has YATES.
 You squint abominably,
So does JONES.
 You drawl intolerably,
So do you.
 You are a mere monotonous mannerist,
So is HOLLAND.
 You have a perpetual whine,
So has COOPER.
 You are but a miserable copy of KEAN,
So is BOOTH.
 In comedy you are quite a buffoon,
So is LISTON.
 In tragedy you are a perfect bore,
So is TERRY.
 You sing as ill as you act,
So does TAYLOR.
 You are ineffably vulgar,
So is INCLEDON.
 You are a vile mummer,
So is BROMLEY.
 You exactly resemble a man milliner,
So does RUSSELL.
 But you have all these defects combined,
 So much the more singular.

AN ESSAY ON DRAMATIC SIMPLICITY OF SENTIMENT AND DICTION.

MR. DRAMA,

I have long thought that an absurd imitation of SHAKESPEARE'S antiquated phraseology has been, in some measure, the cause of our entire declension from simplicity in the latter productions of the stage. Our modern drama is generally an heterogeneous contexture of quaint expression, insipid pun, and unnatural fustian, communicated

in that species of style, which DRYDEN not unhappily denominated "prose run mad." Much as I admire the figurative boldness and lofty conception of our literary ancestors, I am not yet enthusiast enough to allow them purity of language. Every person acquainted with the most famous authors of ELIZABETH's time, will acknowledge that a boastful display of technical pedantry was too often substituted in place even of the common tongue, as then current. The historian and philosopher were no less guilty of this false taste than the poet, as is evident from the elaborate pages of the great RALEIGH and the greater BACON, who, with a cumberous luxuriancy of learning, have rendered some of their choicest compositions either metaphorically turgid, or metaphysically obscure. The wild scheme of SIDNEY, though the politest scholar of his age, to engraft the Roman with the English idiom, is sufficiently ridiculous in its ill success, and few have followed an example so preposterous and extravagant. It is, indeed, rather wonderful that the prose writers of this reign are the most obsolete and affected; and that SPENCER, who, from the nature of his subject, might have taken the greatest liberty, is, in reality, antiquated as he may seem to some people, the chastest, and, of course, the most classical amongst them.

In the sprightlier days of CHARLES, so much had the importation of French phrases prevailed, that it almost threatened final extermination to the old hereditary Saxon; and the language became a flimsy patchwork of Gallicisms, as it had been, just before, of Greek and Latin innovations. I have frequently, at this more advanced period of cultivated diction, considered it no small disgrace to the invention of our countrymen, that we are forced, certainly through indolence or caprice, to copy from our neighbours almost every scientific term proper to the mechanic or military art; and even the fine wits, "the mob of gentlemen who write with ease," esteem it a vast accomplishment to interlace their productions with this pilfered tinsel.

Although I confess ADDISON's style to be a perfect and delightful model, yet I cannot help thinking that the world has been extremely and deliberately unjust to the

primary exertions of STEELE. I not only admire his periodical lucubrations for their fortunate exhibition of versatile fancy, for their easy and polished humour, and for their superior excellence of ethic admonition; but I likewise applaud him as the manly restorer of scenic decency of plot, interesting, not intricate, and of dialogue, sprightly, though not splendid. The sentiments of *Cato* are confessedly elevated and noble, but, alas! too far removed beyond the sphere of common life, while even the most censorious may allow that there is moderate emulation of virtue still remaining sufficient to impress any spectator, not totally callous, with a respect and love for the beneficent, affable, and elegant character of *Bevil*.

SWIFT may be impartially estimated amongst the highest for his clear sententious gravity, and the unembarrassed brilliancy of his conception, which could render the thorny path of disputation agreeable, and enliven the severity of politics with captivating emanations of genuine wit; but being in no wise related to our design, his beauties can be only mentioned and admired. We now return to our principal objects, the drama and its children; whose perfections we shall endeavour, in a cursory way, to discriminate and point out for imitation.

The immortal SHAKESPEARE, from the narrow limits of his education and original habits of life, must necessarily have adopted many vulgarisms and low conceits, very improper for a modern to copy; and as for his happier and sublimer flights, they are, indeed, inimitable. JONSON'S comedies, with all their merit, are so laboriously stiff, and the joint compositions of BEAUMONT and FLETCHER, with all their wit, so insufferably licentious, that I can select, from the whole dramatic galaxy of these times, but one author, not quite exceptionable as to regularity and moral precision, and this author is MASSINGER. His incidents are, generally, well conducted, his unities are regarded with some attention, his characters delineated in a masterly and forcible manner, and his dialogue, considering the age he wrote in, remarkably chaste and nervous. I am surprised that more of his plays are not revived and adapted for representation, which they might be with very little trouble and less expense, as they are

seldom loaded with pageantry and shew, too often the only recommendation of those things we at present, not inaptly, call *spectacles*.

THEOBALD, whom POPE, with more malice than justice, chose for the unfortunate butt of his satirical spleen, has written a play, which I think could be still successfully introduced to the stage; it is in the style and manner of SHAKSPEARE, to whose pen THEOBALD himself attributed it, alledging that he had merely altered a few passages in the manuscript, and presumed on some trivial addition. The hero, who is frantic, had a very striking likeness to *Octavian*, but whether the ingenious author of the "*Mountaineers*" was aware of the fortuitous resemblance or not, I cannot pretend to determine.

There is another composition which I have formerly read with much pleasure, a tragedy, entitled "*The Fatal Extravagance*," but I cannot recollect its author's name, nor did I see any name affixed to it; it is full of simple pathos, deeply affecting, and no inconsiderable painting of domestic sorrow. Why are so many jewels suffered to lie by, when the town is so often deluded with empty glitter, most evanescent frivolity? One would almost suppose that the kingdom was inhabited by a race of laughing philosophers, from the paucity of good tragic productions; or that they were, in fact, so completely miserable in their own gloomy situation, that they could afford no room for the admission of fictitious misfortune.

Though I cannot reconcile myself to that strange jumble of smile and tear, levity and anguish, which constitutes a tragi-comedy, or what we more emphatically term a play; first, as the introduction of the comic must always weaken the energy of the tragic part; and, secondly, as the emotion of different passions at one moment, like an hysteric, is not in itself pleasing; yet I must give the palm to one whose two great productions are thus huddled together, as "*The Poet of the Heart*." This intellectual sovereign is SOUTHERNE, whose "*Isabella*" and "*Oronooko*" must charm as long as the human breast can feel, or the human passions can be interested.

I know that those authors who countenance tragi-comedy the most, aver that it is a true and faithful delineation of

the chequered scenes of real life; no indifferent plea in its favour: yet DRYDEN, who was an adept in the practice, lays the blame on the distempered and vitiated taste of the audience; and SOUTHERNE, in a prologue, has these lines:

“You see we try all shapes, and shifts, and arts,
To tempt your favours, and regain your hearts;
We weep and laugh, join grief and mirth together,
Like rain and sunshine, mix’d, in April weather.”

Capricious, indeed, were the good critics of their time, who could prefer rhyme to reason, who extolled the “*Spartan Dame*” and the “*Fate of Capua*” beyond “*Isabella*,” and were better pleased with “*Don Carlos*” than the “*Venice Preserved*” of the same author. After all, I confess that the more vulgar scenes of “*Isabella*” are necessary and natural; and that those of “*Oronooko*” are conducted with much ingenuity throughout; but what reader of sensibility, who can pity perverted genius, will not be concerned at the expiring quibble which the poet hath so unluckily put into the mouth of the honest, unrepining, *Aboan*?

————— I had a living sense
Of all your royal favours; but this last (meaning the dagger)
Strikes through my heart.

In this piece I could, on strict perusal, remark many more deviations of this kind from nature and her expression; but the whole is so animated, so eloquent, so sublime, and yet so simple, that it would be a sort of censorial stoicism to quarrel with trifles.

What can I say of OTWAY—the plaintive, the tender, the soul-distracting, profligate OTWAY, who, by some secret magic of prevailing numbers, can bid us, at one moment, pity and detest, scorn and admire, and shed the sympathising tear over the fall of vice itself! To wave “*Venice Preserved*,” whose hero is a factious cut-throat, and whose second hero is an uxorious, treacherous, whimpering coward, let us turn to the “*Orphan*.” Not to say that *Monimia* is an exact semblance of a longing, irresolute, boarding-school girl; *Chamont* an ungrateful, hot-headed

bully, deserving to be cashiered from any regiment; and *Acasto* a mere walking old gentleman; how horrid, how absurd is the fraternal compact! and how blameable the professed hypocrisy and deceit of *Castalio*, who will not own he is justly punished, yet who does not deplore that punishment at the end! It is the skill, the fancy, the irresistible witchery of the poet, that elicits light from darkness, and averts the dazzled eye from deformity, by a last insinulative enchantment of verbal delusion. Take away sentiment and diction, pathetic expostulation, and the voice of nature personified, where will the splendid fabric vanish? What shall we discover but licentiousness and disgust beneath this veil of roses? Such are the charms of appropriate and energetic language.

The author of "*Douglas*," in our own days, has received great and deserved encomium: he was certainly initiated in the school of SOUTHERNE, and particularly happy in the choice of his materials; yet, strange as it may appear, some of his incidents bear no slight resemblance to those in a very whimsical comedy. It is wonderful this similarity, though quite immaterial, has not been observed by those who have either seen or read the "*Rehearsal*." *Old Norval* in the one, and the *Fisherman* in the other, are the same; there is a casket saved, and a prince discovered. But, as it may be no unentertaining employ to compare both performances—to remark the association of ideas in different heads, and to be convinced how nearly our loftier efforts may be allied to the burlesque, I leave this task to the curiosity of the reader. "*Douglas*" is certainly the last boast of the buskined muse which I have seen, or expect to see, during the prevalence of pantomime.

There are a few plays now entirely laid by, or only perused by the friends of true dramatic taste, which I shall beg leave to enumerate and recommend, more for their purity of style and correctness of execution, than for those poetical beauties they so eminently possess. Such are FENTON's "*Mariamne*," HUGHES's "*Siege of Damascus*," and FROWD's "*Philotas*" and "*Fall of Saguntum*;" the two last are admirable examples of strong patriotic sentiment, and evince very extensive powers of declamation. WHITE-

HEAD'S "*Roman Father*," though not entirely discarded from the modern stage, is in many places, tedious and tame; the catastrophe is too shocking even for the upper gallery; the death of a sister by a brother's hand is not calculated to inspire admiration, the object of the poet, and, on the whole, it is much inferior to BROOKE'S "*Gustavus Vasa*."

As it would appear rather ridiculous even to class a poetical maniac amongst those sons of the legitimate drama whom I have proposed as worthy of imitation, I have reserved LEE for the last. He was certainly a man of amazing fancy—even his extravagances would set up a dozen of our piddling playwrights; but it is my business to elucidate his perfections not his faults. His "*Theodosius*," to "talk big" in his own manner, is prodigal of beauties; the character of *Varanus*, the lover, is finely conceived, and delicately finished; nor is the rough, warlike bluntness of old *Marcia*, without its peculiar charm. It is to be observed, that the scene between *Theodosius* and this honest veteran has given rise to two of the same complexion—one between *Anthony* and *Ventidius*, in DRYDEN'S "*All for Love*," the other between *Juba* and *Syphax*, in ADDISON'S "*Cato*." They are all equally excellent. His "*Rival Queens*," on account of a mad hero, suited well with the abilities of a mad poet, and there are various beautiful touches through the course of the piece; yet, what is very wonderful, considering its shewy decoration, triumphal entry, and magnificent banquet, it is rarely performed. In my opinion, amidst all its wild horrors and bloody preparations, there is much good writing in a play of his, entitled "*L. Junius Brutus*;" and I do not fear to stand by my opinion at this period, when the playhouse is a complete sepulchre, stuffed with hobgoblins, monsters, devils, and monkeys.

IMMERITO.



THEATRICAL INQUISITION.

———" The actor bodies forth
The form of things unseen ;
——— and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

KING'S THEATRE.

Aug. 5.—With the performances of this night, "*Ricciardo et Zoraide*," and "*Alphonso et Leonore*," this house closed for the present year. Those who are in the habit of frequenting the Opera do not recollect a more productive season than that which has just terminated. Night after night has the pit been crowded to an inconvenient degree, and the boxes have been filled with all the fashion and much of the beauty of the metropolis. This has certainly not been the result of any extraordinary attention on the part of the managers to the comforts and the tastes of the public. Nothing could be more offensive than the state of the house, the seats dirty, the painting brown with age, and the hangings waving in shreds to the winds that whistled about the interior. In excuse for this gross disregard of the gratifications of the audience, it has been said that the tenure of the manager was too precarious to warrant his incurring any expense for the purpose of repairs and improvements. Whether this be true or false is of little consequence. The state of the house is indisputable, and the fault lies somewhere. We can ascribe, therefore, the patronage of the public to no other cause than the attraction of the performances, acting upon an improved and increased musical taste. It is quite clear that within the last few years music in this country has been cultivated to an unusual extent, and has now become an element of ordinary education. Italy and Germany have been the fresh and overflowing fountains from which new and grand acquisitions have been poured into the country. The Italian Opera is the great channel of communication. During the last season the company, though far from complete, has still been very tolerable. After the opera, Madame CAMPORESE was enthusiastically

called for, and presented herself amidst the warmest greetings; it is understood to be her farewell performance in England. The ballet succeeded, but we have nothing new to observe respecting it. COULON, Madames ANATOLE and RONZI VESTRIS, were excellent as usual. The whole performance went off with *eclat*. The house was one of the most crowded during the season.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.

Our theatrical office, with respect to this theatre, is this month almost a sinecure; in fact, the manager is making so good a thing of his old stores, as will be perceived by our journal for the month, as not to be under the necessity of incurring any great expense, and still greater hazard, in the production of novelty. The Haymarket is, indeed, buying "golden opinions from all sorts of people," and has made strides in the domain of public favour never surpassed even in the most brilliant days of the old theatre. Crowds nightly overflow the benches. This every lover of the drama will be truly happy to hear, as it is but a proper tribute to the indefatigable exertions of the managers and actors, who, certainly, use their utmost endeavours to please.

July 22.—Seeing is Believing—Sweethearts and Wives—Family Jars.

23.—Padlock—Ibid.—Mrs. Smith.

24.—Match-making—Ibid.—My Grandmother.

25.—Sweethearts and Wives—Mrs. Smith—A Roland for an Oliver.

26.—Match-making—Sweethearts and Wives—Killing no Murder.

28.—Beggar's Opera—Exchange no Robbery.

29.—Padlock—Sweethearts and Wives—Peter Fin.

30.—Match-making—Ibid.—Family Jars.

31.—Lover's Quarrels—Ibid.—My Grandmother.

Aug. 1.—Twelve Precisely—Ibid.—A Roland for an Oliver.

2.—Barber of Seville—Twelve Precisely—SPANISH BONDS; or, Wars in Wedlock—[1st time.]

The "*Barber of Seville*" was this evening "revived." For our own parts we do not exactly understand the *philology* of play-bills, and cannot, for the life of us, perceive how the performance of a stock-piece merely, for the first time in any season, can be called a "*revival*;" but let it "take any shape" it pleases, we are glad to welcome the "*Barber of Seville*."—The music is among the prettiest of ROSSINI, and has been adapted to our stage by the sweetest of English composers, BISHOP. VINING played *Almaviva* very well; in the drunken scene he was natural enough, and, in the disguise of a music-master, full of humour. In *Bartolo* WILLIAMS was amusing. It is rather an uphill part; but this actor has a great deal of talent, and contrives to get over difficulties of this sort with comparative ease. His songs were fairly sung, though in a voice far from being the sweetest. Mr. LEONI LEE in *Fiorello* sung very well. His voice is good, and there is much skill in his execution, but they are both weighed down by an inordinate share of assurance. LISTON made *Figaro* laughable, without being much obliged to the English translator of the piece. There is not a sparkle of wit in the dialogue, and all the comic effect of the part is in the situations, worked up by the skill of the actor. If any one can find the materials for laughter in a bad part it must be LISTON; and we had a specimen of his cleverness in drawing "a soul of goodness out of things evil." The principal charm of the opera was Miss PATON; she was in beautiful voice, and sang in her best style. Her duet with *Fiorello*, "*Oh, maiden fair, the morning breaks,*" was fine; but her best song throughout the evening, was "*Tyrant, soon I'll break thy chains.*" In the second act, the ballad air, "*An old man would be wooing,*" was given with great humour as well as beauty, and was loudly encored. The opera was altogether very well received.

Afterwards a new farce succeeded ; it was a very stupid production, and the audience appeared to think so, by their early and severe reprobation. The story was so happily contrived as to defy unravelling, and the dialogue was so tame and watery as to destroy all our wish to under-

stand the story. As far as we could get at the meaning it was this:—LISTON (*Don Alva*) and Mrs. JONES have a daughter, *Isabella* (Mrs. CHATTERLEY), who is loved by Mr. VINING, a handsome youth, and Mr. WEST, a decrepid old sinner. The young lady prefers the young man, but there is a little jealousy excited about a lost miniature, and kept up by the artifices of the old lover; however, the artifice is at last detected, the loss of the picture accounted for, and the young lovers made happy—at least we presume so, for the last half hour was “dumb shew and noise.” There was a great pretension to wit in the language, without one solitary success; in short, it had nothing to rescue it from the sentence of damnation which it received. It is idle to criticise a failure, or to speak of the acting flung away upon such trash.

4.—Blue Devils—Sweethearts and Wives—A Roland for an Oliver.

5.—Match-making—Ibid.—Family Jars.

6.—Sweethearts and Wives—Mrs. Smith—Roland for an Oliver.

7.—Twelve Precisely—Sweethearts & Wives—Peter Fin.

8. Padlock—Ibid.—Match-making.

9. Beggar's Opera—Blue Devils—Roland for an Oliver.

11.—Sweethearts and Wives—Mrs. Smith—Review.

12.—Barber of Seville—Pigeons and Crows.

13.—Blue Devils—Sweethearts and Wives—Love, Law, and Physic.

14.—Seeing is Believing—Young Quaker—Killing no Murder.

O'KEEFE's comedy of the “*Young Quaker*” was revived here this evening, and was received with much approbation. This happy writer ever recommends himself by the cheerful moral infused into all his pieces. The story of this pleasant comedy is no doubt familiar to most of our readers. Mr. VINING, as *Young Sadboy*, gave a good account of his character, and he was paired admirably with Miss CHESTER, as *Dinah Primrose*; the part is not a very prominent one as to the acting, yet the interest it excited was very considerable. There was much merit in Mr. WILLIAMS's *Shadrach Boaz*, though the matter was sometimes rather overdone. HARLEY [*Splatterdash*] was as full of animal spirits as usual, and LISTON's *Clod* produced

abundant laughter. His continual admiration of *Chronicle's* [TERRY] wig, which he said was "*just for all the world like the sign of the White Lion in our parish,*" was almost too much for the *sides* of the audience. Miss LOVE played *Amarinta* pleasantly; and the piece was given out for repetition amidst considerable applause.

15.—Twelve Precisely—Sweethearts and Wives—Family Jars.

16.—Match-making—Marriage of Figaro—Simpson and Co.

"*Simpson and Co.*" was performed this evening for the first time at this house. The characters were supported almost altogether by the same performers as at D.L.T. : the only material differences were that Mrs. GIBBS played *Mrs. Simpson* for the first time, and performed it with much spirit, although we do not think she exhibited the jealous wife so strictly according to nature as Mrs. GLOVER. Miss CHESTER played, for the first time, the part of *Mrs. Bromley*; but, although at times she gave it much spirit, we have seen her in characters where we liked her much better. Miss LOVE performed *Mrs. Fitzallan* for the first time, and tolerably. TERRY, as *Peter*, was as admirable as ever.

18.—Sweethearts and Wives—Mrs. Smith—Farmer.

19.—Africans—Simpson and Co.—Twelve Precisely.

20.—Sweethearts and Wives—Match-making—A Roland for an Oliver.

21.—Twelve Precisely—Young Quaker—Simpson & Co.

22.—Seeing is Believing—Sweethearts and Wives—Family Jars.

23.—Sweethearts and Wives—Mrs. Smith—Simpson and Co.

ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.

July 22.—My Aunt—Miller's Maid—Turnpike Gate.

A Mr. BROWN, who was stated by the bills to be from the York Theatre, but who is the same gentleman that played *Jemmy Green* in "*Life in London,*" at the Adelphi last season, appeared, for the second time, in the character of *Matty Marvellous*, in the "*Miller's Maid.*" His

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performance was, however, far from successful; he is a poor imitation of Mr. HARLEY. Mr. RAYNER's performance of *Giles* reminded us most strongly of poor EMERY in the same part. He is not perhaps quite equal to EMERY; but it must be allowed he is superior to every other performer of the same cast of parts. In some respects he is better than EMERY himself; he has the advantage of youth, and a more manageable person. He has a fine, manly, and powerful voice—a countenance singularly flexible—an eye dark and expressive—and an unpretending manner that gives great effect to his performance. The great distinction of EMERY—his immense superiority over all other actors of rustic parts, consisted in the perfect self-possession, and the quiet chasteness of his manner. He was never at fault, never appeared taken by surprise; but with him all went on smoothly and naturally. This is a merit which Mr. RAYNER has not completely mastered; and yet his acting, although at times unsteady and uneven, is good, even in its most faulty parts. Practice and a patient obedience to the suggestions of fair and liberal criticism will qualify his disposition to overact, whenever he comes to passages of deep and agitating emotion, and teach him the strict bounds within which the bursts and heavings of passionate emotion should be confined. In the character under consideration he displays genuine dramatic talent. The slow creepings of suspicion, and the deep devotion of a rude but manly heart, were represented with masterly fidelity to nature; and when his love rankled into jealousy, his tragic acting very much resembled some of the best points of Mr. MACREADY, untarnished by the trickery which often tarnishes that clever actor's personations. In the final scene, where he surrenders *Phæbe* to the arms of his rival, and joins their hands, the struggle of conflicting feelings was quite awful; his whole frame seemed convulsed with passion. His performance was received as it deserved. That marvellous creature, Miss KELLY, was a worthy coadjutor to Mr. RAYNER.

23.—Marriage of Figaro—Three and the Deuce.

24.—Knight of Snowdown—Rival Soldiers—Fire and Water.

25.—My Aunt—Miller's Maid—Sharp and Flat.

26.—Knight of Snowdown—Amateurs and Actors.

28.—PRESUMPTION! *or, the Fate of Frankenstein*—
[1st time]—Rival Soldiers—Sharp and Flat.

It has been observed, that "to him who sends forth his remarks upon the theatres *once in a month*, there constantly occurs the disheartening reflection, that long ere the day of publication shall arrive, the objects of his remarks will have been completely forgotten; and consequently no interest will attach itself to his strictures, though they may be distinguished by most profound ideas, and the smartest observations. The editor of a *daily* paper is much more fortunately circumstanced. Ephemeral as the existence of any piece may be, he is certain of being able to enter upon the subject of its merits while it has yet the gloss of novelty upon it, or, at all events, to give the earliest intelligence of its untimely dissolution. Even the *weekly* editor has some chance of being in at the death; but the poor *monthly* drudge is, in general, completely left in the lurch, and his praise or censure is perused with the greatest indifference." We feel ourselves in exactly the same situation with respect to the present production, which, before our readers can possibly have had an opportunity of perusing our erudite remarks upon its merits, will have been so often talked of in all the penny, twopenny, threepenny, fourpenny, and sixpenny daily and weekly periodicals, with which the metropolis at present abounds, that the "glimpse of newness" that would have at all rendered them palatable will have evaporated, and our labour will, we fear, only be regarded as a vain attempt "to chronicle small-beer." However, as the "*Fate of Frankenstein*" has been considered as presenting more of novelty than any other melo-drama produced for some years past, and may perhaps *hereafter* be deemed a "*curiosity*," as it has *already* been by more than one critic, we shall take the liberty of saying somewhat more on such an "awful piece of business," than perhaps the distance of time since its production would, under other circumstances, warrant.

This piece is avowedly founded on the leading peculiarity of the novel of "*Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*," by Mrs. WOLSTONCROFT SHELLEY, the widow of

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY, and daughter of Mr. GODWIN, the author of "*Political Justice*," and other celebrated works. The novel itself is one of the *boldest* of fictions; and did not the authoress, in a short preface, make a kind of apology, we should almost pronounce it *impious*. We trust, however, that the writer had the moral in view, which we are desirous of drawing from it, that the *presumptive* works of man must be frightful, vile, and horrible, ending only in discomfort and misery to himself. It is, however, at best, one of the wildest and most fearful of romances; it is an uncommon effort of imaginative power, a masterly product of powerful and irregular genius, and is certainly executed with an ability not at all inferior to its conception. In the preface to the novel, it is observed, that "the event on which this fiction is founded, has been supposed by Dr. DARWIN, and some of the *physiological writers of Germany as not of impossible occurrence*. I shall not (continues Mrs. S.) be supposed as according the remotest degree of serious faith to such an imagination; yet, in assuming it as the basis of a work of fancy, *I have not considered myself as merely weaving a series of supernatural terrors*. The event, on which the interest of the story depends, is exempt from the disadvantages of a mere tale of spectres or enchantment; it was recommended by the novelty of the situations which it developes; and, however impossible as a physical fact, affords a point of view to the imagination for the delineating of the human passions, more comprehensive and commanding than any which the ordinary relations of existing events can yield."

The story of "*Frankenstein*" is told, in a letter from a Captain Walton to his sister, Mrs. Saville, residing in England. Walton is almost as much of an enthusiast as the wretched Frankenstein, whom, as the Captain is in search of finding the North-West Passage, and penetrating as far as possible to the extremities of the Pole, he meets, engaged in the pursuit of the demon-being of his own creation: Walton rescues Frankenstein from the imminent danger of losing his life, in this pursuit, amongst the floating flakes of ice; and after this *Prometheus* relates his history to Walton. We shall perhaps present our readers

with a better idea of the piece, by giving them an abstract the story as detailed in the performance, when they will of perceive the alterations of the dramatiser.

Frankenstein is a Genevese whose mind had been early warped by a perusal of those authors who deal in the marvellous; he devotes himself entirely to chemistry, and the study of natural philosophy. The structure of the human frame particularly excites his attention, and, indeed, every animal endowed with life, and then proceeds to examine the *cause of life and death*. He pores over the midnight lamp, disturbs the hidden recesses of nature, haunts the charnel-house, and tortures chemic skill to discover the principle of life by which inanimate matter might be quickened, and eventually succeeds, giving existence, imparting the "Promethean fire" of life to the giant form of a man! On a dark and tempestuous night of November he completes his work. Triumph, however, is calamity to the ill-fated creator, and success in his unholy skill overwhelms him with mental torture. Forth stalks a being, with something of the human form, but of so ghastly an appearance, so super-human, so monstrous in its gait and grin, that to look on it is appalling. It seems to breathe a livid pestilence, and its touch appears to threaten existence; it is far more hideous than MILTON'S *Death*. Of

" ——— All prodigious things,
Abominable, unutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feigned, or fear conceiv'd,
Gorgons, and hydras, and chimeras dire,"

the dæmon here imagined is the most abominable; it moves "every inch a nameless, speechless monster—careless, reckless, and fearless of what's past, present, or to come; insensible of mortality, and desperately mortal." Even the dramatist does not venture to give it a name: both author and adapter have herein shewn their judgment; they both shrunk from the task of giving such a monstrous production of the brain a name, as well as a "local habitation." The bills mark that "———" will be personated by Mr. T. P. COOKE. This foul fiend continually haunts *Frankenstein*; it punishes him with retri-

butive severity of the most frightful kind: for, finding itself shunned, and even the object of deadly attack, where grateful sentiment ought to have existed, it resorts to the most diabolical means of destruction and revenge. It pursues its creator every where, and endeavours to strangle, murder, and destroy, all those in whose fate he is interested, and goads him on to distraction. Near to the residence of *Frankenstein* and his sister, there resides on the borders of the Lake of Geneva a blind old gentleman, *De Lacy* [ROWBOTHAM], whose banished family consists of a son, *Felix* [PEARMAN], and a daughter, *Agatha* [Miss L. DANCE]. *Frankenstein* is betrothed to the daughter, and the son, *Felix*, is in love with *Safie*, an Arabian girl, [Miss POVEY]. The fiend is attracted to *De Lacy's* cottage by the sweet tones of a flute; but, as soon as he is seen, all are filled with horror. The daughter of *De Lacy* meets with an accident in falling into the lake; her screams attract the monster, who plunges in, rescues her from a watery grave, and bears her in safety to the cottage. On her recovery, on seeing the horrible being to whom she is indebted for life, she becomes violently agitated, and again sinks into insensibility. Her brother, who enters at the moment, and observes her emotion, naturally concludes that the dæmon is the murderer of his sister, fires at him, and desperately wounds him in the arm. The anguish of the pain arouses all the dormant feelings of revenge which lay within his breast, and he immediately devotes himself to the destruction of his creator, by whose arts he received that life which has now become detestable. He instantly seizes a brand from the blazing hearth, and enveloping the cottage in flames, escapes to the wilds. Hovering around the dwelling of *Frankenstein*, he seizes for his prey, *William*, his young brother, whom he strangles, and his bride, *Agatha*, on her wedding night, falls a victim to the fearful power of the dæmon. The work of immolation would not have stopped here, had not *Frankenstein*, desperate from grief and agony, and strong from despair, resolved to rid the world of this fiendish incarnation, or perish in the attempt. He unremittingly pursues him from place to place, through woods and wilds, and at last comes in contact with it in one of the Swiss

valleys, and here, while contesting with the monster in human form, he fires a pistol, which proves fatal to them both—for the jarring of the atmosphere brings down a tremendous *avalanche* of snow, which buries the “presumptuous” *maker* and *the made*, the fatally curious philosopher, and the abortive creation of his unholy skill, in one common ruin. Here closes the story as represented on the stage. Though such a catastrophe was brought about somewhat suddenly, it is hard to say by what other means the dramatiser could have dramatically closed the dreadful story—for it is natural to suppose that the end of such an abortive creation could only be brought about by some terrible convulsion of nature. The experiment, however, of introducing so hideous a dramatic monster on the stage is as bold a one as ever we saw made, notwithstanding the fact that it is borne out by the powerful moral which it carries continually with it. As SWIFT said of “*The Beggar’s Opera*,” being so far removed from the ordinary materials of theatrical composition, even in these our days of melo-dramatic monstrosities, “it was calculated to be eminently successful, or a signal failure;” and the present piece, although it met at the conclusion with some trifling disapprobation, certainly received immense applause.

The frightful, nameless, and speechless creation of *Frankenstein*, was sustained with appalling truth and force, almost with truly Germanised horror, by Mr. COOKE. With the art of a FUSELI, he powerfully embodied the horrible, bordering on the sublime or the awful. His exhibition of giant strength, of towering gait, and of reckless cruelty, contrasted with the fiend’s astonishment on hearing a “concord of sweet sounds,” and on beholding female forms, or in saving a human being from drowning, was masterly and characteristic. His method too of dressing the *Vampire* form was also admirable. His whole appearance was fearful to behold, and is almost out of our power to describe. The green and yellow visage, the watery and lack-lustre eye, the long-matted straggling black locks, the blue livid hue of his arms and legs, shrivelled complexion, straight black lips, and the horrible ghastly grin that sickened over his features, all formed a

picture of the terrific, from which we really turned with shuddering. A daily critic, in his remarks upon Mr. T. COOKE's personation, observed, "that in the museum at Florence is a wax representation of the great plague in that city, where the bodies of the dead and dying "strew the hungry church-yard," if one of them were made to "live and move, and have a being, it would be an exact counterpart of this horrible incarnation." In the scene, when the philosopher had completed his work, with imparting life to what was before a lifeless mis-shapen mass, the newly-created being's style of rushing on the stage amidst flame was truly terrific. Its subsequent change of feelings, with the varied scenes and treatment to which it is exposed, display admirable discrimination in the performer. Those who are acquainted with Mr. COOKE's peculiar style of acting, and the ability with which he sustained the somewhat similar character of the *Vampire*, may well imagine how much he makes of this part; and they may not lament, as speech would diminish the delusion, by bringing the monster nearer humanity, that the actor has nothing to say. In a word, it is an unequalled performance, and will deservedly elevate Mr. COOKE to the highest rank in this particular part of his profession. Mr. WALLACK's personation of the agonized being, whose fatal curiosity, and whose still more fatal success had led him to form such a production, was sustained with great feeling and impressiveness. His features, however, are too handsome, frank, and good-natured to express the darker emotions of horror, remorse, and despair; but he entered strongly into the spirit of the character, and infused a degree of mental energy, that rendered the part of a highly interesting description. Indeed, the sole interest of the piece centres in this character and the monster, for, when they are not on the stage, the piece is flat and insipid; when they appear, it is interesting, although that interest is too much counterbalanced by the heaviness and horror which attends it. There are several other characters which aid in carrying on the story; but, although they come recommended with smiles, songs, and humour, the two beings already described absorb so much attention, that the minor personages "come like shadows, so de-

part." Mrs. AUSTIN acted the part of *Frankenstein's* sister, *Elizabeth*; her business was merely confined to two or three songs, which she sang pleasingly. PEARMAN played *Felix*, he was in good voice, and gave all his ditties with tasteful execution. We wish we could say as much for his taste in the selection of his dresses: they were on this evening the very reverse of elegant. In the first part of the piece he had something of the appearance of a "Little flaxen-headed cow-boy that whistled over the lea," and in the last like a jackdaw in borrowed plumes. Miss L. DANCE, in *Agatha*, looked very beautiful and fascinating, and sang one song with particular success. KEELEY was amusing enough as *Fritz* the philosopher's servant; such, however, is the sameness of this gentleman's style of acting, so limited his power of imparting the "living principle" to inanimate matter, that, after the first scene or two, his lamentations about his "milk and his mutton, his cow and his cottage," become sour and stale. His jokes, however, are some of our oldest friends, known to us from our youth up. A gypsy fellow, one of a crowd, who has but one eye, and about two sentences to utter, has a splendid part compared with *Fritz*. Some one tells him he has but one eye: "Yes, a little boy flung a pebble in my eye, and I have been stone blind ever since."

Mr. PEAKE, who has already acquired a sort of fame by some lucky hits at farce writing, is the adapter of the present piece, but we do not think it will add much to his fame. He may be a very smart person at the making up of little lively interludes and summer operas, but he is certainly not equal to themes so fearful as the story of *Frankenstein*. It is a magic circle where he must not tread; it is too bold a task for him to attempt the calling "spirits from the vasty deep," or to dally with the forbidden secrets of the grave, or of summoning up from the gloomy and mysterious recesses of a dark and fitful imagination its fearful and appalling creations, it is beyond his genius to conceive, or his powers to comprehend. The only person fit for such a task, as the dramatising "*Frankenstein*," would have been GEORGE SOANE, from whose hands the whole would have come forth with if not increased effect, at least unaccompanied by those nonsensical

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frivolities, which are so unsparingly interlarded by Mr. PEAKE, and which greatly detract from the interest of the piece. It is a subject so well adapted for the Germanic temperament of Mr. SOANE, that we are surprised he has never made use of it. Mr. PEAKE has, however, given the whole thing such an appearance of originality that he is entitled to considerable commendation. The music, on the whole, was of the poorest kind, and not in the least applicable to the terrifying events of the piece. There was much boisterous applause throughout the whole of the performance, especially where the "walking pestilence" deals death and destruction around. It has been repeated several times since with varied success, and we cannot but deny that this strange melo-drama has excited a very considerable degree of curiosity in the town.—"*Sharp and Flat*" concluded the entertainments: though very ludicrous it was still very tedious. CHAPMAN's appearance in *Solomon* was provokingly laughable, and he played with more originality than we thought he possessed. KEELEY made a good thing of *Nikey*, which is more than the author did. Miss HOLDAWAY romped spiritedly enough in *Rosabel*; we think this young girl is destined to become a very great favourite with the public. Mrs. WEIPPERT was amusing in *Jenny*: the rest were only tolerable.

29.—Ibid.—Where shall I Dine? — Love among the Roses.

30.—Ibid.—Free and Easy—

31.—Ibid.—Roland for an Oliver—Rival Soldiers.

Aug. 1.—Ibid.—Gretna Green—Where shall I Dine?

2.—Ibid.—Love among the Roses—Amateurs and Actors.

4.—Ibid.—Sharp and Flat—Miller's Maid.

5.—Knight of Snowdown—Fair Gabrielle—Love among the Roses.

6.—Presumption!—Is He Jealous?—My Aunt.

7.—Ibid.—I WILL HAVE A WIFE—[1st time]—Miller's Maid.

This pleasant little piece is a translation from "*Le Capitaine Belronde*" of PICARD, and is a very neat and amusing production. The plot is simply this:—*Admiral Fire-drake* [BARTLEY], full of wealth and honours, retires to

his estate with the intention of taking to himself a partner for the rest of his life. For this purpose he invites to his country house four ladies, *Mrs. Ogilby* [Mrs. GROVE], and her niece, *Emily Rosebank* [Miss POVEY], *Mrs. Summerfield* [Miss L. DANCE], a young and handsome widow, and *Miss Hardy* (his lively ward). He is undecided which of the ladies to select, but is resolved to marry one of them. Whilst in this dilemma, his nephew, *Captain Firedrake* [PEARMAN], arrives, to spend a short time with the old gentleman. Soon after, *Billy Badger* [BAKER], the stupid son of the *Admiral's* attorney, drives up on a visit for the same purpose, and he is followed by a *Mr. O'Leary* [POWER], who alights from the Bristol coach, in which he had taken a seat through mistake. The *Admiral* begins by proposing to *Mrs. Summerfield*; but she, it seems, is already married to *Mr. O'Leary*, whose Bristol story was all a fabrication. Disappointed in his first courtship, he is about to propose to *Miss Hardy*, when he discovers that she is in love with *Billy Badger*, who is no other than the dashing *Henry Merton* in disguise. One chance is still left, and he flings himself at the feet of *Emily Rosebank*, who is over head and ears in love with his nephew. Unhappy in all his proposals, he at last turns to *Mrs. Ogilby*, who is a widow of forty, and she receives him with rapture, and thus ends the piece. BARTLEY, in the *Admiral*, was excellent; we never saw him play with more vivacity, spirit, and humour. His love was uncommonly tender, and his disappointments lamentably sad. The piece indeed rested its chance of success almost entirely upon his exertions. Mr. PEARMAN was better dressed than is usual with him, and played the part of young *Firedrake* very decently. He sang a song to the delicious French air, "*C'est l'Amour*," with much elegance and sweetness, and was deservedly encored. In the part of *Merton*, Mr. BAKER evinced a talent that we did not believe he possessed. It is wonderful how very clever some persons are at hiding even the little ability that belongs to them. Mr. POWER, in *O'Leary*, was excessively amusing. His brogue, though not quite so rich as we have heard it, was not the less comic for being chaste. The ladies had little to do, and therefore it is not much praise to say that they did that

little well. Miss POVEY sang a sweet air very delightfully, and was encored. Altogether the piece was extremely well played, and went off with great applause. It is not very substantial in its materials, but it is light, gay, and pleasant. The translator, whether he be attached to this theatre, or to the Olympic, has done his part of the business well: it will probably last the season. We ought not to forget the *naïveté* with which it was announced for repetition by Mr. BARTLEY, who came forward, and bowing, said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, with your permission, 'I will have a Wife' to-morrow."

8.—Ibid.—Ibid.—Free and Easy.

9.—Ibid.—Love's Dream—I will have a Wife.

11.—Ibid.—I will have a Wife—Miller's Maid.

12.—Ibid.—Is He Jealous?—I will have a Wife.

13.—Ibid.—I will have a Wife—Miller's Maid.

14.—Ibid.—Ibid.—Where shall I Dine?

15.—Ibid.—Ibid.—Miller's Maid.

16.—Ibid.—Rendezvous—I will have a Wife.

18.—Polly Packet—Monsieur Tonson—Presumption!

Mr. MATHEWS made his first appearance before the London public, since his return from America, in the "*Adventures in the Polly Packet*," and "*Monsieur Tonson*." The stores which he has gleaned during his sojourn among our transatlantic brethren are not to be spread open, we are given to understand, until the winter season, when we may expect a full and fertile budget of whims, oddities, and characters, picked up from other countries; we are told he has made a rich and abundant collection of facetious and amusing portraits for our amusement and delight hereafter. Of his performances in the "*Monologue*," all are so well acquainted, that we need not enlarge on them here. His *Irish Steward*, *Monsieur Jeu-singe*, *Mr. Theophilus Tutip*, and *Major Longbow*, were all uncommonly rich, the latter in particular; in fact, there is scarcely a finer and more perfect piece of genuine acting on the stage. His *Morbleu*, in the farce, was played with the most laughable luxuriance of comic effect; it was the acme of ludicrous yet exquisite acting, as might naturally be expected from a man of Mr. MATHEWS's peculiar powers; and yet a daily critic absurdly remarked, that it "was impolitic in

Mr. M. to play it at all : for why should a man, whose various and exquisite talents are able alone and unaided to fascinate an audience for three hours, thrust himself into any thing which levels him with other actors, which raises up rivals, and obliges him to share with them the applauses of the public ?” Such assertions as these are not worth arguing upon. For our own parts, we never sat out a performance which we so truly enjoyed, or felt such inward gratification at seeing ; and that a man should be blamed for yielding us that enjoyment, merely because the character he undertakes has been before well acted, is to us the strangest reasoning we ever heard. Miss L. DANCE performed *Adolphine* most interestingly ; Mrs. TAYLEUR caricatured *Mad. Bellegarde* rather too much. The part of *Tom King* suited WRENCH to a hair ; he hit the character exactly. It is just in his mercurial bustling, vivacious way. The rest of the characters were fairly acted, and the piece was announced for repetition with great applause.

19.—Ibid.—Ibid.—I will have a Wife.

20.—Ibid.—Ibid.—Presumption !

21.—La Diligence—Ibid.—I will have a Wife—Where shall I Dine ?

22.—Ibid.—Ibid.—Miller's Maid.

23.—Ibid.—Ibid.—Presumption !

MINOR DRAMA.

SURREY THEATRE.

Aug. 11.—This theatre having undergone the most extensive alterations and improvements, opened, for the winter season, this evening. In the fitting up of the house the utmost taste and liberality has been displayed. To Mr. KELLY, of D.L.T. the highest praise is due for the elegance with which every part has been improved, and the house may be pronounced the most elegant in London. The prevailing colour of the house is a pale blue, overlaid with rich burnished gold scroll ornaments. The boxes have been much reduced in size, and a number of family boxes partitioned off, and rendered truly comfortable to

the audience ; in fact, while the study of the managers has been to gratify the eye, comfort has also been attended to. Backs have been placed to the seats in the boxes, and also in the pit ; a very splendid cut-glass chandelier (an improvement always much wanted in this house, where the deficiency of light rendered the audience scarce visible to each other) has been suspended from the cieling, and being lighted with gas, throws a chastened yet brilliant light over the whole. In fact, we scarcely recollected the "Old Surrey," in its present masquerade dress of blue and gold, with its flounces of crimson and curtains of velvet. A portico is erecting outside the theatre, which will be of great service on rainy nights. Indeed, the proprietor appears to have spared no pains to add to the pleasure and comfort of his audiences, and we heartily wish him success in his undertaking ; we can only say that this theatre has burst upon us in a style of brilliancy, beauty, and comfort, which places it on a level with any other in the metropolis. The performances, on the night of opening, were two new pieces, called "ANTIGONE, or the Theban Brothers," and "LAURETTE, or the Forest of Underwald," both of them from the pen of Mr. BALL, the author of many dramas which have received our favourable commendation. The present productions will not detract from his fame as a compiler of interesting melo-dramas. Mr. BALL is, moreover, the writer of "*Thalaba*," played also on the same evening, for the first time, at the Cobourg ; and it has been remarked, in consequence, that "if the minor managers pay their authors at any decent rate, Mr. BALL will soon be able to prefix the epithet '*golden*' to his name." This we heartily wish may be the case ; but we could also wish, as we have before remarked, that he would aspire to a higher walk of the drama, which would redound more to his fame and credit, and for which he seems well fitted.

"*Antigone*" is founded on the "*Septem contra Thebas*" of ÆSCHYLUS, and the "*Phænissa*" of EURIPIDES, and although not without considerable talent and interest is really extremely heavy in the performance. From the plot, it appears that *Eteocles* [H. KEMBLE], urged on by ambition, has, previous to the opening of the piece, usurped the crown of Thebes from his brother, *Polynices*

[GALLOT] the rightful heir. *Polynices*, joining with *The-
seus*, *Prince of Argos*, attempts the recovery of the throne,
of which he has been so unjustly deprived, and for that
purpose appears before the city of Thebes with a consider-
able army to enforce the restoration of his rights. From
the representation of *Tiresias* [HENDERSON] an old blind
prophet, whose voice is held as sacred as that of the oracle
itself, *Eteocles*, feigns sudden qualms of conscience for his
past misdeeds, and, by dint of friendly professions towards
his brother, lures him into the palace. Here he informs
him that he feels inwardly tormented by the past baseness
of his conduct, and is determined to atone for his treachery
by reinstating him on the throne : however, nothing is far-
ther from his thoughts. *Hæmon* [BURROUGHS], the son
of *Creon*, has been betrothed to *Antigone*, [Miss KIM-
BELL], the sister of *Eteocles* and *Polynices*, and from this
circumstance the usurper, working on his feelings by
threats of for ever losing *Antigone*, instigates him to at-
tempt the life of his brother while buried in sleep. *Hæmon*,
goaded on to madness by the representations of *Eteocles*,
at first consents, but, when on the point of committing the
deed, his better angel comes to his assistance, and his re-
fusal irritates *Eteocles*, who, wrenching the dagger from
his grasp, plunges it (as he supposes) into the breast of his
sleeping victim, and then denounces *Hæmon* as the assas-
sin. *Tiresias*, however, from the gift of foreknowledge,
perceiving the intended fate of *Polynices*, by a secret pass
leading from the palace to the ancient tombs of the kings
of Thebes, leads him forth in safety, leaving on the couch
merely his cloak and some other habiliments. *Polynices*,
on learning the intended treachery of his brother, is fired
with rage, and immediately assembling his chiefs leads
them to the gates of the city, where he is encountered by
his equally enraged brother, in single combat, by whom he
is slain. *Eteocles*, in the bitterness of his hate against
him, denies him the rites of burial, and, with a tremen-
dous oath, denounces the direst vengeance against any one
who should presume to inurn the ashes of his brother, or
even to approach within a certain space of the corpse.
Antigone, however, heedless of the consequences, in the
dead of night steals from the city, and with the burning

tears of fraternal affection piously inhumes the body of her brother; and, when *Eteocles* furiously demands who dared to brave his vengeance, she boldly stands forth and avows "the deed her own." She is doomed to be buried alive, and some scenes of a very interesting nature between herself and lover follow. *Prince Theseus*, determining to revenge the death of his friend on his unnatural brother, now besieges the city, and after some skirmishes succeeds in meeting the usurper, whom, after an arduous contest, he disarms and wounds. Stung with remorse at the remembrance of his crimes, and seeing the destruction his own fatal ambition has brought on himself and race, he determines, by one act of justice at least, to atone, in some measure, for his villainy. He is carried to the gloomy abode, where *Antigone* is entombed alive; and making one expiring effort places his crown on the head of *Hæmon*, and then joining his hand to his sister's, sinks lifeless into the arms of his attendants, and the curtain falls.

Such is the outline of the plot, from which it will be seen that it is far from being devoid of interest, although we must say some parts were excessively tedious, and want considerable pruning; yet, upon the whole, it is a very superior piece for a minor theatre, and deserves a better run than the generality of pieces of this description usually obtain. Amongst the actors, Messrs. KEMBLE and BURROUGHS were decidedly the best, although the former did not perform, we think, with his accustomed ability; he appeared labouring under indisposition—he was some in parts intolerably ponderous and monotonous. The latter played better than we have ever seen him: in the lighter part he was vivacious and graceful, in the more melancholy powerful and energetic. They both obtained justly-merited approbation. Miss KIMBELL (a pupil of Mr. BENGOUGH's) made her first appearance, and was pretty well received. She is a good-looking girl, and has some talent; but her voice has a most disagreeable whine, and her attitudes and action are at times very ungraceful. She must study closely, and endeavour to get rid of defects, which, if suffered to grow on her, she will never eradicate, and which will unfit her even for a minor theatre. Her acting (if such it can be called) is all art; she wants

power, expression, and, most of all, judgment. We speak thus freely, as the young lady appears to have been taught in a vile school, the bad taste of which we advise her to rid herself of as soon as possible. The rest of the performers are unworthy of notice. It is a pity the manager has not selected a better company, which we think he might easily have done ; at all events, he must not think of carrying on the whole of his winter campaign without some very strong additions, and those of the first-rate kind. He must recollect the cold frosty nights are fast approaching, when it will require something possessed of more powerful attraction than the roarings of Mr. KEMBLE, the whinings of Miss KIMBELL, the graces of Mr. BURROUGHS, or even the charms of that " dear delightful little fairy," Mrs. FITZWILLIAM (who certainly must be acknowledged a host in herself), to draw us from a blazing fire. We merely give this word of advice, *en passant*, for a little retrenchment in the lavish profusion with which this piece is got up, would have enabled the manager to have engaged several better actors than any now in the company. The scenery, dresses, decorations, and properties, are of the most magnificent and expensive kind ; the costumes appear to have been selected from the best authorities ; but this might be expected, when it is recollected that Mr. SMITH is stage manager, whose attention, even to the minutest peculiarities of national dress, has been universally acknowledged. The whole of the scenery is painted by Messrs. TOMKINS and WALKER, and is calculated to raise them to the highest pinnacle of their profession. *The distant View of the City of Thebes by Sunrise—Inside of a Theban Temple—A Street in the City—Entrance to a subterraneous Pass near the City, with a distant View of the ancient Tombs of the Kings—One of the hundred Gates of the City, and the Interior of the gloomy Cavern, where Antigone is entombed alive*, are truly grand and original. With these advantages the piece could not fail to be highly successful ; it was received with acclamations.

The laughable interlude of "*Winning a Husband*" followed, introducing Mrs. W. BARRYMORE, after a long absence from London ; she was well received, and highly

applauded in all her transformations. The entertainments concluded with a new melo-drama, founded on one of the tales of MARMONTEL; it is an interesting, light, and airy little piece, but with a very simple plot. *Laurette* [Mrs. FITZWILLIAM] is the daughter of *St. Oswin* [KEMBLE], a recluse the fame of whose charms having reached the ears of *Vandemar* [GALLOT] the son of *Marshal Delmar*; he, with his friend *St. Prieux*, seize her at a village fête, and bear her off to a carriage in the neighbouring forest. The carriage, however, breaks down, and *Laurette*, eluding the grasp of her ravishers, flies into the depths of the forest. After wandering some time, she, at length, meets with the *Marshal* himself, to whom she sues for protection; he conducts her to his *château* in safety, and places her under the care of his attendants, until such times as opportunity occurs to return her to her father's. *St. Oswin*, learning the name of the seducer of his daughter, applies to the *Marshal* for justice, which, after some time spent in surprise, at discovering in *St. Oswin* an early friend and fellow-soldier, *Delmar* consents to, by joining the hand of his son with that of the daughter of his friend. Mrs. F. played *Laurette* in her usual interesting manner. LOVEDAY performed the touchy wayward, choleric, good-hearted old *Marshal*, with spirit, truth, and nature; it was an admirable performance. There were some pretty dances by Mr. CONWAY and Mademoiselle MARIA, and the scenery was delightful, particularly the *Cottage of St. Oswin*, situated in a *Vineyard*, with a distant View of the *Lake of Lucerne*, which was truly beautiful. The piece was well received by a house crowded in every part to suffocation.

COBOURG THEATRE.

Aug. 11.—*THALABA, the Destroyer!* This is a very excellent and interesting melo-drama, founded upon SOUTHEY's "wild and wonderful" tale of the same name, and follows with fidelity the principal points of the chequered existence of the "spell-bound *Thalaba*," so well portrayed in that singularly wild and fantastic, yet beautiful poem. The magnificence with which it is got up deserves the highest

commendation, and the success which it has met with has well repaid the proprietor for his liberality. The author is Mr. BALL, and he has most admirably dramatised this powerful fiction of a bold imagination. We need scarcely state the plot, as we believe the poem has been the most read of any of SOUTHEY's productions. *Thalaba* [HUNTLEY] is the son of *Hodeirah*, Sultan of the Isles, who has been basely murdered by *Hamed* [BENGOUGH], by whom the throne has been usurped. *Thalaba*, whose destruction had been determined on, was, when an infant, entrusted to the care of *Ali* [HOWELL] an officer of the court, with full charge to destroy him; *Ali*, however, instead of executing his orders, leaves him exposed near the cottage of *Moath*, a peasant [HARWOOD], by whom he was found, and brought up in obscurity, whose daughter, *Oneiza* [Miss EDMISTON], he at length marries. *Thalaba*, when at a proper age, is goaded on by "supernatural solicitings" to regain his paternal throne, and overthrow the power of the base usurper, who has leagued himself with *Kawla* [Mrs. STANLEY] the Enchantress of the Isles, who, learning from her incantations that the time of her destruction and that of the usurper approaches, from the superior power of *Thalaba's* guardian spirits, raises a *Dæmon* [BRADLEY] from the bottom of the wild waste of waters that envelope the isles, and gives him full power to search out *Thalaba*, and wreak her vengeance on him. His adventures are full of peril and intense interest, of "hair-breadth escapes from the fangs of dæmons and enchanters, the pains of hunger and thirst, the temptations of magical delusions, and the tortures of lamenting and hopeless love. However (according to the usual rules of all melo-dramas), he rises superior to his foes, triumphs over human and devilish agency, and secures the enchanted burning sword belonging to his father, given him by *Marmina*, the Peri of Faith; and secures, by a single blow, his faithful *Oneiza*, and his sceptre. The scenery is uncommonly grand, and is far beyond any thing exhibited on this stage for a length of time. The first scene, the *Sepulchre of Zeinah* (the mother of *Thalaba*), by moonlight, with the awful incantation of the enchantress, and appearance of the spectre of *Zeinah*, was magnificent and impressive. The *Entrance to*

the Silver Cavern, guarded by a stupendous winged serpent—*Interior of the Cavern*, with the colossal statue and altar, bearing the seven lights and burning sword, and a *Ruined Cemetery*, all painted by JONES, were some of the finest specimens of the art we have ever witnessed, and called forth thunders of approbation. *The Towers, Fortifications; and Rocks of Badelmandel*, and the *Valley of Date Trees*, by sunrise (by WILKINS), were also delightfully painted. One is really surprised to find so much talent any where out of the “national theatres,” yet a liberal expenditure will always command excellent artists, and these have been manifestly at work in the scenery and machinery of “*Thalaba*.” The acting was also superior to what we in general find at this theatre. HUNTLEY was highly energetic as the *Destroyer*, and Miss EDMISTON played his beloved *Oneiza* charmingly; we only feel a regret that she should be placed where her talents cannot be duly appreciated: however, we are pleased with her any where. Mrs. STANLEY’s was a powerful performance, for the *Enchantress* is a part so well suited to her powers that she could not fail to be impressive. BENGOUGH was respectable, and the rest of the performers threw in their aid with diligence and attention, and the audience were most liberal of their approbation. Between the first and second pieces a new drop scene was exhibited from the pencil of STANFIELD of Drury Lane. The subject is Italian, and, as a work of art, it is very beautiful; but we can see no necessity for resorting to artists out of the house, when those belonging to it have put forth such specimens of their powers as are exhibited in the first piece. An interesting melo-drama succeeded, entitled “*A Soldier’s Faith*,” founded upon an incident which happened during the time of that hypocritical piece of business known by the affected title of the “*Cordon Sanitaire*,” it was well played. The house was crowded to excess.

18.—FRANKENSTEIN; or, the *Dæmon of Switzerland*.—Our copious notice of the piece at the E.O.H. under the same name, will relieve us from the necessity of saying much on this production: in most points it is of the like description, although there are some alterations certainly not for the best. The *Dæmon*, in the present piece, is

endowed with speech, and holds a long conversation with his maker "*all about nothing.*" *Miss Clara* also discards her lover in consequence of his unnatural creation. The present *Dæmon*, however, is so much endowed with the milk of human kindness, that he preserves his creator twice from destruction, and is at last destroyed himself by the fall of part of the burning ruins of a church, to which he had fled for refuge, from the mad pursuit of the peasantry, leaving his creator in "*this wide world alone.*" It was not well received, although the actors exerted themselves meritoriously. BENGOUGH played the *Dæmon*, but he was so heavily laden with speeches, tinged with moral maxims, that he appeared lost in a mist. Mrs. POPE made an interesting *Clara*; and STANLEY, for a wonder, put on a sedate countenance as the profane searcher into the forbidden mysteries of nature. The piece must be liberally curtailed, not that we think it will ever be a favourite with the public; it wants every requisite to interest the feelings, and which the piece, on the other side the water, possesses in an eminent degree.

ROYAL AMPHITHEATRE.

Aug. 4.—BONDUCA; or, *the British Queen*—[1st time]
 —The programme of this historical piece is as follows:—*Prasatagus*, king of the tribe of Britons called the *Iceni*, in order to secure for his wife, *Bonduca*, or *Boadicea*, and her two daughters, *Erlida* and *Inah*, the protection of the Romans, then masters of the island, at his death left half his estate to the Roman emperor; but *Cæsar's* officers, on pretence of taking possession of his share, turned the *Queen* out of her palace, publicly scourged her, and treated her daughters with the most barbarous and brutal indignities. The Britons, fired with resentment, and excited by the spirited exertions of *Bonduca*, revolted against their Roman masters, and a devastating war begun, in the course of which the Romans, being obliged to fortify themselves in the fortress of *Camelodunum*, the Britons, with *Bonduca* at their head, stormed and burnt the fortress to the ground, putting the whole of the garrison to the

sword. This part of the history of that Amazonian queen, with some episodes of fiction introduced for dramatic effect, forms the foundation of the present piece.

At a theatre of this kind, where performances are intended chiefly for the display of ingenious horsemanship and bustling pageantry, one can scarcely expect any thing like a strict adherence to the laws of the drama. The audiences who resort to such places expect no such thing; and the present piece is one precisely of that description which is calculated to delight such an audience. It is that sort of exhibition which shows the power that human art can exercise over the docility of animals, while at the same time it gives an animated representation of those combats which CÆSAR describes as having taken place between the original natives of Britain and the Roman invaders; and, at the same time, the sentiments expressed by *Queen Bonduca* are calculated to impress the present inhabitants of this country with a noble spirit of patriotism.

After an ineffectual attack made by the Britons to prevent the Romans from landing on their coast, the *Queen* (well personated by Mrs. MAKEEN) comes forth, accompanied by her two daughters, in a war chariot drawn by seven horses, and makes a patriotic address to her warriors and amazons who were collected around her. The war then commences; and after several doubtful conflicts, in which the contending parties are seen fighting with infantry, upon hills, in the villages, and in chariots, the Roman fortress of *Camelodunum* (now Maldon in Essex) is stormed, set on fire, and a triumphant victory is eventually obtained over the Roman usurpers. There are some humorous episodes which serve to relieve the piece and excite laughter among the audience. The paintings, particularly those of the landscapes and Druidical temples, are executed in a tasteful and masterly manner, and the whole performance was greeted with unanimous commendation. The frolics of "*Peregrine Pickle*" followed, and were received with their usual relish.

ADELPHI THEATRE.

MR. DRAMA,
You ought to apologise for having neglected to notice

Mr. JOHN REEVE's attractive entertainment at this house ; perhaps, however, the omission is of less importance, as I feel persuaded that very few of your readers have carried their self-denial so far as to forego the pleasure of paying him a visit. Mr. REEVE's imitative talents have long been before the public, and his exertions this season have contributed in no small degree to increase his well-merited popularity. Still, as an impartial observer, I must say, that he falls short of MATHEWS in rapidity of utterance and flexibility of voice, nor are his features equally susceptible of those endless varieties of physiognomy, which the *ultra-longitude* of MATHEWS's countenance enables him to assume with such surprising facility. In the absence, however, of that extraordinary man, Mr. REEVES is decidedly the prince of imitators ; and I feel no hesitation in expressing my opinion, that he possesses the requisite qualifications for succeeding in the regular drama to an extent not surpassed by MATHEWS himself. His "*Trifles Light as Air*" are, to my mind, "confirmation strong as proof of holy writ," of his superior talent for legitimate comedy ; and in the midst of the amusement and gratification which his performance afforded me, I felt something like regret that I could not witness him in what I conceive to be a more appropriate line of business for his abilities. The ease and success with which he goes through the whole of an entertainment, the first part of which was originally written for a performer so different, in his style of acting, is a decided proof of Mr. REEVE's extraordinary versatility ; and when to this is added his justness of conception, mastery of features, admirable style of comic singing, and rich vein of genuine humour, I am justified in asserting, that an union of such qualities would render him a most valuable acquisition in the retinue of THALIA on any stage. It has been whispered to me, that the manager of one of the winter theatres has expressed a disposition to avail himself of Mr. REEVE's talents, and I should be happy to find the rumour confirmed, for the sake of both the theatre and the public.

It would be a want of justice to Mr. REEVE to omit noticing the rapidity with which he changes his dresses in the last part of his entertainment—his excellence in this particular exceeds any thing I have hitherto seen. His per-

formance this season has, from its commencement, been distinguished with the most unequivocal marks of public favour, and continues to be a source of unabated attraction.

I am, &c. C.

COUNTRY THEATRICALS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Aug. 9.—Our elegant theatre opened, for the season, on Monday the 4th instant. Much praise is due to our worthy manager for his very spirited exertions during the recess. Mr. SCRUTON has displayed abilities of a very superior order as an artist; his pencil has been employed with great effect, and we have now scenery equalling, if not surpassing, any provincial theatre. The opera of "*Rob Roy*" introduced to us a Mr. MATTHEWS from the Bath Theatre, who sustained the character of the bold outlaw, but we have seen it in abler hands. *Helen Macgregor* found a very able representative in Mrs. DAVIES, who was greeted, on her appearance, with the warmest approbation. Miss GEORGE, from the Bath Concerts, as *Diana Vernon*, was excellent; she is a most delightful little warbler, and when she has acquired a little more ease in her action will certainly rank very high as an operatic performer. In two of her songs, and the duet of "*I love thee*," she was encored. Mr. BEDFORD, as *Francis Osbaldistone*, would do well to throw a little animation into his performance; and it would appear more natural, when he makes love, if, instead of expressing himself so tenderly to the audience, he were to address the object of his affection. Mr. FLOYER, as the *Bailie*, was, as usual, all we could wish. The farce went off unusually well.

On Wednesday evening, "*As You Like It*," and "*Love Laughs at Locksmiths*," *Rosalind* by a Mrs. HAMBLYN, a very pretty interesting woman, *Orlando* by Mr. MATTHEWS. We fancy this character might have been dished more to the general satisfaction had it been given to a very clever COOKE the company has to boast of, and whom we are sorry to see kept so much in the back-ground. The farce was sustained by some of our favourites—FLOYER, SHALDERS, DONALDSON, HOLLINGSWORTH, and the charm-

ing little syren, Miss GEORGE. On Friday, the "*Wonder*" and the "*Padlock*," the latter of which was performed in a very superior manner, particularly the character of *Leonora*, by Miss GEORGE. We understand Mr. MACREADY is engaged for the ensuing week, and we anticipate a great treat: this speaks well for the liberality of our manager.

A SOUTHAMPTON OBSERVER.

TOWN TALK, No. XI.

POTIER, the celebrated favourite of the theatre of the *Port St. Martin*, at Paris, was lately condemned to pay 25,000 francs damages, as an indemnity for the loss sustained by that theatre, in consequence of his absenting himself for ten months, in breach of his contract. The damages were laid at 400,000 f., calculated on the average receipts of the house of 60,000 f. per month, and considering him responsible for the loss on each representation, in consequence of his defection.

An order from the ministry, founded on the same considerations as those that suppressed the *Album les Lunes* and the *Miroir*, has also suppressed the *Courier des Spectacles*. In consequence, there remains but one journal dedicated to the drama in France, which is the *Courier des Theatres*.

Government is generally reckoned to be omnipotent as well as omniscient, but they have just received a small disappointment. Great expense had been made to render the *Royal Theatre of the Odeon* (called, by special permission, the second *Theatre Français*), the school of royalism and legitimacy; and nearly every play was altered, for the purpose of inserting fulsome panegyrics on the good qualities of their projectors, or the blessings of the good old times. The dowager-countesses and broken-down noblesse of the Faubourg St. Germain had sworn to support its cause, and the royal treasures were profusely employed in bringing labourers into the vineyard; but all has failed. The directors are obliged to give up the concern in despair; new directors have been appointed, and the public in England will be glad to learn, that the French are fast returning to religious feelings and practices; for this splen-

did theatre is destined for the future to act nothing but dramas, taken from the *Sacred Writings* and the *History of the Martyrs*.

An actor, of the name of LAFONS, was lately received on trial at the Grand Opera in Paris (*pour faire ses debuts*), and a fine figure and powerful voice gave him every hope of brilliant success; but he took it into his head to fall in love with an actress at the Opera, who never performed in the same pieces with him, but who had great reputation for her performance, in the rôle of *amoureuse*, on and off the stage. Poor LAFONS has found that she has left him but an awkward part to perform; his health is gone, nothing new in that; but his voice is gone also, and that is his whole means of subsistence. He continues his wretched *debuts*; it is difficult to hear him, and painful to see the efforts he makes to be heard.

—————"Nulla vox, et preterea nihil."

The late Mr. KEMBLE.—Mr. JAMES BOADEN is preparing for publication a Life of this distinguished individual, including a History of the Stage from the death of GARRICK to the present time; it will contain a faithful record of his personal history, and of his professional career, illustrated with characteristic anecdotes, extracts from a carefully preserved correspondence, and a variety of information derived from genuine and unexceptionable sources, accompanied with biographical and critical notices of the principal writers and performers, and thus serving as a compendium of dramatic history during the time of our great tragedian.

Arrest and detention of M. GARCIA at Calais.—On M. GARCIA returning lately to Paris, on the termination of his engagement for a limited period at the Italian Theatre, he was arrested at Calais, and placed under *surveillance*. He is not allowed either to quit France, or to proceed to Paris, but is forced to remain where he is, and to wait on the mayor twice every day.

It is reported that Mr. SOANE is constructing a tragedy for Drury Lane Theatre, upon the foundation of SCHILLER's "*Robbers*." KEAN is to perform the character of *Charles*. The piece is something more than a translation, Mr. SOANE having undertaken to omit all that is not dramatic, and to

substitute from his own stores some important scenes calculated to produce strong interest. It has been also stated, that Mr. BEAZLY is occupied in a similar task, and that, Mr. ELLISTON is to decide upon the merits of the two.

The celebrated musical composer, SPONTINI, has secluded himself in one of the islands of the Spree, for the purpose of devoting his whole time to the composition of his great opera. He is mad, it is said; it is probably the madness of genius.

The theatre in Georges Street (the only one in Limerick), is shortly to be converted into a Roman Catholic Chapel, it having been purchased by the Rev. Mr. CRONIN, of the Augustinian Friary, in Creagh Lane. The purchase money does not exceed 400*l.* and the rent 30*l.* a year. The erection, a few years ago, of this splendid edifice, cost four thousand pounds!!! So much for the depreciation in the value of building ground.

We learn from Germany, that the Dramatic Censor of Austria has caused the denouement of *William Tell*, a tragedy by SCHILLER, to be altered. It is no longer true that *Gessler* was the tyrant, and *Tell* the Liberator of Switzerland. In the new history which alone has any claim to appear on the boards, *Tell* misses his aim at *Gessler* three times, who pardons him as often, and the piece concludes with long live the Austrian, long live *Gessler*!

In a very thin house an actress was speaking very low in her communications with her lover, when the actor, with a face of woful humour, exclaimed, "My dear, you may speak out, you see there is no one to hear us."

HAYMARKET THEATRE.—The Fourth Report of the Crown-land Revenue Commissioners (just printed by order of Parliament) states, that a "a plot of ground on the east side of the Haymarket, and west side of Suffolk Street, with a theatre and a messuage thereon, was leased, for 99 years, from January 5, 1821, to DAVID EDWARD MORRIS, Esq. at the yearly rent (a pepper-corn rent for the first two years) of 356*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.* and 38*l.* 19*s.* in lieu of land-tax redeemed by the crown: the costs, charges, and expenses incurred in erecting and finishing the said theatre and messuage being 8000*l.*" Thus the ground-rent alone of the "Little Theatre" is nearly 400*l.* a year.

Destruction of the Whitby Theatre by fire: This building was entirely consumed by fire on Friday morning, June 25. SCOTT's company had performed on the evening of Thursday, and the theatre closed about eleven o'clock; soon after which the performers quitted the house, and every thing was considered safe. Soon after one o'clock, it was discovered, however, that the building was on fire, and such was the ascendancy of the flames, that before four o'clock the theatre was entirely consumed, the walls only being left standing. The company, we regret to say, have lost the whole of their dresses, &c. with about 80% in money. It is not known how the accident originated.

GARRICK's *Salé*.—Some of the most prized and authentic relics of GARRICK and SHAKSPEARE were sold by auction on Monday, July 21, by direction of the Court of Chancery, at GARRICK's villa, at Hampton, viz.—A vase and pedestal of the most exquisite workmanship, formed of the mulberry-tree planted by SHAKSPEARE, curiously mounted and ornamented with silver gilt, and a finely polished black marble base and steps, the pedestal containing a medallion of SHAKSPEARE on one side, and on the other the following inscription:—"Sacred to the memory of WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, the applause, the delight, the wonder of the British stage, born 1564, died 1616;" supported on a carved and partly gilt bracket, with a glass cover. This vase was placed in the chamber in which GARRICK slept, and it sold for 22*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.* A singularly curious elbow chair, enriched with the emblems of Tragedy and Comedy, admirably carved from a design by HOGARTH, with a medallion of SHAKSPEARE on the back, carved from a portion of the celebrated mulberry-tree by HOGARTH himself, sold for 152*l.* 5*s.* This chair was always placed by the side of the statue of SHAKSPEARE by ROUBILLIAC, in the temple dedicated to the bard. A noble Marquis is said to be the purchaser. We regret that the trustees of the British Museum, to whom GARRICK bequeathed the famous monument, were not the purchasers. A medallion portrait of SHAKSPEARE, carved on a piece of the Stratford mulberry-tree, and originally worn by GARRICK at the Jubilee, sold for 13*l.*

In Paris a mania, like the *Tom and Jerry* one of Lon-

don, exists ; and *tout le monde* flock to the theatre, Port St. Martin, to see a piece called *Polichinel Vampire*, whose hero is our old friend *Punch*.

LIVERPOOL THEATRE.—We have a serious charge to make against the inhabitants of Liverpool. These worthies are apparently reverting into all the barbarism of business and methodism ; they are fast abandoning matters of taste, and soon, we suppose, we shall hear, that some prudent dealer out of regard for his apprentices, or some fanatic for the souls of sinful play-goers, will set fire to “ *the haunt of idleness*,” “ *the den of Beelzebub*,” as they are pleased to call the theatre. We are led to these remarks by the following piece of information :—

“ Our London favourites, KNIGHT, BLANCHARD, YATES, MEADOWS, WEBB, Miss F. H. KELLY, and Miss SMITHSON, have all performed on the same evening to 20*l.*; nor is this a single instance of the want of theatrical patronage in that great and populous place.”

At a representation of a French comedy, in July, 1822, at the West London Theatre, in the midst of a scenic part, the ornamental figure of the sun under the stage box fell down with a heavy crash upon the stage, and covered it with plaister ; upon which Mons. LAPORTE (a leading comedian), looking up at the place where it had shone so refulgently, restored good humour and laughter, by exclaiming, “ *Ce n'est rien q'une eclipse messieurs.*”

Matrimonials extraordinary.—We understand that Mr. DAVIS, a well-known *Blood* at one of our theatres, led to the hymeneal altar, on Saturday, August 2, the accomplished Miss DANCE, who, a short time since, made a successful *débüt* at Covent Garden Theatre ; and Mr. J. VINING, of the Norwich Theatre, also recently conducted to the same envied spot, SARAH HOLMES, a fair friend, daughter of Mr. HOLMES, one of the Society of Friends, near Ipswich.

LISTON, according to report, is to receive 50*l.* a week during the ensuing season at Drury Lane Theatre. Miss STEPHENS is to have 25*l.* every night she performs.

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